



## Office of Rehabilitation Services

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October 21, 2005

Edward Anthony, Acting Commissioner  
Rehabilitation Services Administration  
US Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Potomac Center Plaza, Room 5025  
Washington, DC 20202-2800

Re: Transmittal of the Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation Services FFY 2006-2008  
State Plan for Assistive Technology under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 as  
amended

Dear Dr. Anthony:

The Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation Services acknowledges receipt of the letter of conditional approval for the three-year State Plan for Assistive Technology.

ORS understands that the approval is conditional; that the State must work with RSA to address the areas at issue as described in the approval letter. Furthermore, ORS will, as required, amend the State Plan for Assistive Technology to reflect its efforts to address non-compliance with the composition of the advisory committee as described in Attachment 3 of the State Plan.

Areas of non-compliance:

- (1) Percentage of individuals with disabilities or family members of individuals with disabilities;
- (2) Representation from the State Department of Education; and
- (3) Representation from the State Workforce Investment Board.

Resolution:

- (1) ORS has completed recruitment to include two additional individuals with disabilities to serve on the Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology (RICAT), percentage has now increased to fifty-six percent (56%);

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- (2) Virginia da Mota, Interim Director, Office of Special Populations, has been appointed to RICAT to represent the State Department of Education; and
- (3) Lorna Ricci has been appointed to RICAT by the Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC), as the WIA representative.

ORS has worked diligently to address the non-compliance issues delineated in the RSA approval letter dated September 23, 2005. An amended Attachment 3 is being submitted with this letter to reflect the resolution of the stated issues.

It is our understanding that with resolution of these issues, no other plan of action will be required by ORS to receive full approval of the Rhode Island three-year State Plan for Assistive Technology.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Raymond A. Carroll", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Raymond A. Carroll, Administrator

cc: Jeremy Buzzell (electronic copy)

**Attachment 1 – Basic Information:**

Name of Lead Agency: Department of Human Services

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Lead Agency: Office of Rehabilitation Services

Address of Lead Agency: 40 Fountain Street, Providence, RI 02903

Name and Title of Certifying Representative for Lead Agency:  
Raymond A. Carroll, Administrator

Address for Certifying Representative: 40 Fountain Street, Providence, RI 02903

Telephone for Certifying Representative: 401-421-7005 x390

E-mail for Certifying Representative: rcarroll@ors.ri.gov

Name and Title of Program Director: Regina Connor, Assistant Administrator

Address for Program Director: 40 Fountain Street, Providence, RI 02903

Telephone for Program Director: 401-421-7005 X390

E-mail for Program Director: reginac@ors.ri.gov

Name and Title of Program Contact (if different from Program Director): SAME

Address for Program Director:

Telephone for Program Director:

E-mail for Program Director:

Name of Implementing Entity: N/A

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Implementing Entity:

Address of Implementing Entity:

Name and Title of Program Director: N/A

Address for Program Director:

Telephone for Program Director:

E-mail for Program Director:

Name and Title of Program Contact (if different from Program Director): N/A

Address for Program Director:

Telephone for Program Director:

E-mail for Program Director:

**Attachment 2 – Lead Agency and Implementing Entity:**

**2.1 – Identification and Description of the Lead Agency:**

The Office of Rehabilitation Services, within the Department of Human Services, has been the lead agency for the Assistive Technology Act program since 1993. The agency has, and will continue to provide the on-going administrative oversight for the AT program, including goal setting, program initiatives, and funding allocations.

The Office of Rehabilitation Services employs the Program Director for ATAP. She possesses a Masters Degree in Rehabilitation, and has worked in the field for approximately thirty years. Besides her professional credentials, she is a user of assistive technology. ORS will also be hiring a Program Coordinator to assist with the on-going activities of ATAP.

In addition to the Assistive Technology Access Partnership, ORS administers the public vocational rehabilitation program, as well as the Rhode Island Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Disability Determination Services. Through the vocational rehabilitation program, ATAP has been able to provide training to vocational rehabilitation counselors regarding the benefits of assistive technology. In addition, ORS contracts with a rehabilitation technology organization to ensure that assistive technology is considered throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

In addition to the range of support and services that the Office of Rehabilitation Services has and will continue to provide - ensuring that the AT program has been comprehensive, and able to serve individuals with disabilities across all ages and disability types, ORS has, and will continue to enter into subcontracts with community-based organizations, including Independent Living Centers (Ocean State Center for Independent Living, and PARI Independent Living Center); an educational center (East Bay Educational Collaborative); a technology-related center (TechACCESS of Rhode Island); and a Center for Excellence in Education (Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College). State procurement requirements are strictly adhered to relative to the establishment of any subcontracts.

The model of coordination and collaboration described above, has strengthened the capacity of the AT program, by incorporating the expertise of a variety of professionals in the field of Assistive Technology across a wide range of venues.

Since 1993, Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL) has provided AT information, referral, public awareness, outreach, training and technical assistance to elders and individuals with sensory impairments. OSCIL brings many years of experience working with adaptive technologies to aid in the increased functioning of individuals with disabilities. For the last seventeen years, OSCIL has been providing assistance in the acquisition of adaptive assistive technology that will increase self-sufficiency in the home and community.

OSCIL has extensive knowledge and experience in the wide range of assistive technology that is available to enable individuals having disability to lead independent lives. As a Center for

Independent Living that promotes consumer involvement at the Board and staff level, many staff at the Center know first-hand the benefits of assistive technology in their lives. This professional as well as personal perspective on the benefits of assistive technology allows OSCIL to assist consumers to know what adaptive device may be beneficial, where to purchase the technology, and how best to train the individual on its use. In addition, OSCIL relies on the expertise of our Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTA) to conduct assessments and provide recommendations on the specific type of equipment that will best suit a person's needs.

OSCIL's expertise in adaptive assistive devices has been a key factor in providing the community living option for individuals with severe disability. Assistive technology has made it possible for people who were residing in nursing homes to have the option to return to their own homes and communities. Over the last five years over 50 individuals who were once in area nursing homes are now living in the home environment of their choice because of the benefits of assistive technology. Over the last five years over 500 individuals have been kept out of an institutional setting because of installation of adaptive home modifications and the acquisition of assistive technology.

OSCIL's Deaf Services are recognized statewide for their significant contribution to assist in addressing barriers to independence. In the Deaf community assistive technology has enabled many families to live safely and enjoy the freedoms that many hearing people appreciate. OSCIL's staff person, who utilizes sign-language as her major mode of communication, as well as OSCIL's COTAs play a major role in providing services to the Deaf

community that are professional and yet extremely user-friendly and accessible to this community.

TechACCESS of RI has been a significant contributing partner to the Assistive Technology Access Partnership since its inception in 1993, and continues to meet the needs of people with disabilities through its varied activities and collaborations.

Through its work with the other ORS/ATAP subcontractors and collaborations with other state agencies and community based organizations, TechACCESS has been responsible for maintaining the statewide ATAP Information and Resource Center which provides free information and resources to the public; a tri-annual newsletter reaching over 3,500 consumers, family members, and service providers; free weekly AT demonstrations; and an adaptive computer lab which provides an opportunity to the public to try out computer related technologies. Additionally, TechACCESS has coordinated the ATAP Assistive Technology Conference with the other ATAP subcontractors and disability agencies to foster public awareness and increase professional skills in the area of assistive technologies for home, school, work and community.

TechACCESS of RI, as a subcontractor of the Assistive Technology Access Partnership for Rhode Island, has operated the ATAP Demonstration Center since the inception of ATAP. The demonstration program is staffed with expert, experienced professionals including speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, individuals with ATP (Assistive Technology Practitioner) certification, educators, and several assistive technology users who



have had many years of experience with blind low vision technologies and hearing technologies. TechACCESS also utilizes licensed/certified consultants who have specific expertise in seating and position and assistive listening devices. The Staff is not only knowledgeable about the wide variety of devices and their applications at home, in school at work and in the community, but they are also able to assist individuals with making informed AT choices. The staff participates in on going vendor trainings several times a year to keep abreast of the newest technologies, and the close relationship with many local and regional vendors enables the staff to obtain the newest equipment available for self-training and demonstration. TechACCESS plans to expand the existing staff to include an additional communication specialist, an additional low vision specialist, and a general AT practitioner.

East Bay Educational Collaborative (EBEC) has, and will continue to provide services to children and youth statewide. East Bay Educational Collaborative is one of four regional education centers established legislatively to provide professional development, curriculum development, alternative learning programs, and parent support for eight local school districts in the East Bay region of the state. EBEC has been an ORS/ATAP subcontractor since 1995, employing the ATAP Children and Youth Specialist. The ATAP Children and Youth Specialist has advanced training in speech and language pathology, as well as being certified by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a teacher assistant trainer. She has also completed her assistive technology certification from California State University, Northridge (CSUN). The ATAP Children and Youth Specialist conducts professional development for teachers in elementary and secondary education, as well as AT assessments for students with disabilities. In

addition, the AT Children and Youth Specialist maintains a demonstration center and device loan program for children and youth.

The Sherlock Center has provided program evaluation services for ATAP. In addition, staff have conducted the program's comprehensive satisfaction study. The Sherlock Center will continue to refine and implement Assistive Technology Competencies for elementary and secondary educators in Rhode Island school districts.

The Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College is one of 62 centers in the United States that has been designated by the United States Department of Health and Human Services as a "University Center for Excellence on Disabilities". University Centers were/are created by federal legislation (most recently continued in 2001). University Centers are described in that federal legislation as having the unique mission of providing training, technical assistance, project coordination, information dissemination, and research in a wide range of disability topics. University Centers are federally mandated to leverage core Center funding with state funds, grants, and other sources to address unique training, service coordination, and research needs that exists in the state in which each Center exists. The fact that Centers are housed at universities provides the mechanism for providing College credit and/or professional development units for training and project activities.

The Sherlock Center has over 10 years of experience in assistive technology instruction for educators, and has strong ties to education, families, and family-centered communities. Housed at Rhode Island College, the Sherlock Center is well prepared to identify, design,

develop, and deliver training in assistive technology content and strategies to pre-service students, in-service professionals, and families.

In order to ensure that people with disabilities have access to a device reutilization program, ORS/ATAP may subcontract with the PARI Independent Living Center, in accordance with State procurement requirements. PARI Independent Living Center is a non-profit, private organization established more than 30 years ago to provide a wide range of services to people with disabilities of all ages. As a community based organization with a Board of Directors made up of a majority of people with disabilities, PARI is responsive to the needs of the disability community. More than a decade ago, consumers requested a location to drop off unneeded medical equipment and purchase medical equipment at reduced prices. PARI responded by creating the PARI Affordable Assistance Technology Program, or the PAAT Program to fulfill this need. This device reutilization program allows those who could otherwise not be able to afford and acquire much needed equipment to become more independent; and it greatly improves the quality of their lives. As described in Attachment 5, ORS/ATAP will seek to find methods and resources to expand the nature of this program.

**Attachment 3 – Advisory Council:**

**3.1 Membership of the Advisory Council**

The Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology (RICAT) was established in 1993 to provide advice and input to ATAP. According to the Council's approved By-laws, total membership is twenty-five. Currently, there is one vacancy on the Council, for which recruitment is underway. The current percentage of consumers and family members equals fifty-six percent (56%). The current membership is as follows:

Flo Adeni-Awosika – Person with a Disability

Kerri Cicione - Parent of a child with a Disability

Kevin Cronin – Person with a Disability

Harry Dunbar – Person with a Disability

Patricia Feeley – Person with a Disability

Richard Gaffney – Person with a Disability

Margaret Hoyer – Person with a Disability

Jeanne Panarace – Person with a Disability

Robert Perrello – Family Member of a Person with a Disability

Charles Pollock – Person with a Disability

William Robinson – Person with a Disability

Jill Waller-Blanney – Person with a Disability

Kim Wennermark – Person with a Disability

Edmund Zuromski – Family Member of a Person with a Disability

John Benevides – Citizens Bank

Virginia da Mota – Interim Director, Office of Special Populations, Representative of RI Dept.  
of Education

Kathleen Fresher-Samways – Professional

Emily Lennon – Meeting Street School

James Litvack – Representative of State Independent Living Center, PARI

Joseph Murphy – Office of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation

Ronald Racine – Office of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation

Adrienne Varner – Representative, Rhode Island Department of Health

Ying Sun – Professor of Bio-engineering, University of Rhode Island

Lorna Ricci – WIA Representative, Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC)

In addition, ATAP subcontractors regularly attend meetings (but cannot vote). They  
include:

Judith Hammerlind-Carlson, Beverly Johnson: TechACCESS of RI

Elizabeth Dalton: Sherlock Center

Lisa Labitt: East Bay Educational Collaborative

Lezlee Schaffer: Ocean State Center for Independent Living

The Administrator of the Lead Agency (ORS) - Mr. Raymond A. Carroll, and the ATAP

Program Director - Ms. Regina Connor - are ex-officio members of the Council.

### 3.2 Structure and Operation of the Advisory Council

(a) RICAT meets at least four times per year, but may meet more often if required. The Executive Committee, which is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, and Chairs of standing committees, meets prior to each regular RICAT meeting, generally one week in advance. Standing committees meet on a schedule determined by committee members, based on required activities. Ad hoc committees meet as needed to accomplish their work. While RICAT meetings are always conducted in person, the various committee meetings may be conducted in person, electronically, via teleconferencing, or a combination of formats.

A typical RICAT meeting agenda includes review and approval of previous minutes, a report from the Chair, a report from each committee, report from the ATAP subcontractors, report from the Program Director, any "special issues" for discussion/consideration, and "roundtable."

(b) RICAT leadership consists of an elected Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, and the Executive Committee. Membership, Legislative, and Communications are standing committees. Recent ad hoc committees have been devoted to Bylaws, Program, Alternative Finance, and State Plan. The RICAT Chairperson appoints all Committee chairs; if necessary, a Committee chair may be removed by a quorum of the full Council.

(c) The decision-making process originates with issues raised at a RICAT meeting by the Chair, the Program Director, or any member of RICAT. Thorough discussion of the issue occurs; if further research is needed, or if a quorum is not present, the issue is continued to the next regular meeting. On the other hand, if an issue is fully discussed, and a quorum present, majority vote will constitute passage/rejection of any motion. In the event of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote.

Much of RICAT's work and planning also occurs at the committee level.

The Executive Committee serves as a steering committee, responsible for providing direction to ATAP staff, making recommendations to RICAT, and developing meeting agendas. The Executive Committee helps to develop specific annual objectives for the standing committees.

The Membership Committee has the ongoing responsibility of nominating appropriate individuals to RICAT, in accordance with the Bylaws. As a basis for nomination, this committee conducts membership outreach, provides membership information, and interviews prospective RICAT applicants. In addition, the committee may review regular member attendance. Each year's outreach, nomination, and successful membership process provide the basis for the following year's plan of activity.

Information and advocacy are the core functions of the Legislative Committee. Federal and state legislation and policies affecting assistive technology are researched, and brought to the

Council. RICAT may then vote to support/endorse such legislation or policy, and take appropriate action. The Legislative Committee may, with RICAT approval, advocate in specific contexts for assistive technology, such as the annual public forums held by the Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities. This committee's planning is fluid; issues for possible legislative/policy advocacy action may be raised by RICAT members, the public forums, or by state or national organizations. RICAT may also propose the development of new state legislation, based on research and information provided by the Legislative Committee.

The Communications Committee works closely with ATAP subcontractors to increase awareness about the availability of, and benefits of, assistive technology. The Committee offers presentations/demonstrations tailored to the needs of a variety of audiences. These presentations may be offered upon request, or targeted to needs identified by the Committee. A recent presentation/demonstration was offered by members of the Communications Committee to staff of an assisted living facility.

(d) RICAT members are recruited through a variety of methods, which include: formal newspaper advertisements; ORS/RICAT website; list serves, web pages, and newsletters of agencies/organizations serving people with disabilities; word-of-mouth. For members representing certain state agencies (Department of Health, Workforce Investment Board, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education), the agency itself is invited to appoint an individual to the Council.

(e) Council meetings are public, in accordance with the RI Open Meetings Law, and are



conducted at locations which are fully accessible, and on public transportation routes. Full accommodation is provided, and may include CART, interpreters, large print/Braille, etc. Meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. RICAT members can be reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out their official duties.

**Attachment 4 – Measurable Goals:**

**4.1 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Education**

**During the first year of this State Plan, ORS/ATAP will establish a base line for increased access to AT in Education. ORS/ATAP will submit an amendment to the State Plan after the determination of a base line for years two and three indicating long term and short term goals.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

**4.2 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Employment**

**ORS/ATAP will establish a base line for increased access to AT in Employment during year one of the State Plan. An amendment to the Plan will be submitted after determining this base line for years two and three.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

**4.3 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Community Living**

**ORS/ATAP will establish a baseline for increased access to AT for Community Living during the first year of the State Plan. An amended State Plan will be submitted after year one describing the long term and short term goals for years two and three.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

#### 4.4 Goal for Improving Access to IT and Telecommunications

**ORS/ATAP will establish a base line for increased access to AT in telecommunications and information technology during the first year of the State Plan. ORS/ATAP will submit an amended State Plan after year one describing the long term and short term goals for increased access to telecommunications and IT.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

#### 4.5 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Education

**ORS/ATAP will determine a base line for increased acquisition of AT in Education during the first year of the State Plan utilizing the approved instrument developed by RSA. An amended State Plan will be submitted to describe the long term and short term goals for years two and three.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

#### 4.6 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Employment

**ORS/ATAP will establish a base line for increased acquisition of AT in employment during year one of the State Plan. An amended State Plan will be submitted after completing a determination of this base line utilizing the instrument provided by RSA for years two and three; including the long term and short term goals.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3:
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

#### 4.7 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Community Living

**ORS/ATAP will determine a base line for increased acquisition of AT in community living utilizing the instrument provided by RSA. An amended State Plan will be submitted describing the long term and short term goals for years two and three.**

- Long-term goal:
  - Short-term goal for Year 3
  - Short-term goal for Year 2:
  - Short-term goal for Year 1:

## **Attachment 5 – State-level Activities:**

### **5.1 State Feasibility Study**

The Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS) has determined that a one-year feasibility study is necessary prior to the establishment of a state Financing System.

In 1988, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed legislation to establish an equipment loan program for individuals with disabilities (RIGL 40–14). A revolving loan program was established. Initially, there were a significant number of loans approved by the Department of Human Services/Office of Rehabilitation Services. Many individuals who were granted the loans, however, did not repay them, resulting in the drastic depletion of available funds for equipment loans.

Subsequently, the Department of Human Services set aside a small amount of money each year for equipment loans. Historically, this small pot of money was not expended year after year. The line item no longer appears in the department's budget. The legislation, however, still exists.

The feasibility study will include a review of the legislation, as well as determine why the loan program was underutilized. The study will also include a review of State demographics - incidence of disability, socio-economic factors, etc. Some sources of information which will be reviewed include comments gathered from statewide public forums on the concerns of people

with disabilities, needs assessment conducted by the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the data collected from the AT and Health study of the Rhode Island Department of Health.

In FFY2003, ORS/ATAP conducted a statewide comprehensive satisfaction study which indicated that available funding for assistive technology is a concern for individuals with disabilities and their families. The feasibility study will consider where funding gaps exist, and how ORS/ATAP can address this issue relative to a State Financing System.

Over the next year, meetings with interested stakeholders, including individuals with disabilities and their families, community-based organizations, and other consumer groups, will be conducted; level of commitment to establish an alternative financing program, or other form of State Financing System will be determined. Outreach to financial institutions will be an integral component of the process.

Next, ORS must consider the reality of available resources - staff and funding for an alternative financing program, or other type of state financing system. Currently, there is not sufficient staff to oversee such an initiative. Depending on commitment of stakeholders, a determination will be made regarding the establishment of an alternative financing program or whether other options would be more appropriate for Rhode Islanders with disabilities to acquire the AT devices and services they need.

The Office of Rehabilitation Services administers the State adaptive telephone loan program, called ATEL. This program is funded exclusively with state dollars. The feasibility study will consider how ATAP could incorporate this program into its administrative responsibilities. The current mission of the ATEL program is narrow, both in terms of equipment and populations served. The study will consider whether ATEL could be expanded to reflect the statewide, comprehensive requirements of the AT Act. ATEL is also a legislatively established program, (RIGL 39-23) meaning that an amendment might be required to modify the scope of the program.

Depending upon the results of the one-year feasibility study, the State Plan for Assistive Technology will be amended to describe a State Financing Program in Rhode Island.

## 5.2 Reutilization Program

ORS/ATAP has determined that a device reutilization program currently exists in Rhode Island. This program has been established by PARI Independent Living Center. Primarily, the range of equipment is somewhat limited – mobility aids, aids for daily living, etc. In general, the devices are donated to PARI by equipment vendors, medical facilities, PARI consumers, and other members of the public. If necessary, the equipment may be repaired prior to making it available for sale (or small donation, or no cost, depending on individuals' economic circumstances). The reutilization program is located at the PARI offices, which are easily accessed by public transportation. If the individual is unable to travel to the Center, the equipment can be delivered to their residence.

Over the next three years, ORS/ATAP may enter into a subcontract, in accordance with State Procurement requirements, with PARI in order to expand the capacity of the reutilization program. During the first year, a base line of consumer access will be established. ORS/ATAP will review the inventory of available equipment to determine its scope, and the areas of demand. Also, socio-economic information of consumers accessing the program will be gathered.

ORS/ATAP will also need to determine the environments in which the devices are being used – education, employment, or community living. A system for accurate data collection will be developed, possibly building on an existing system.

ORS/ATAP will explore whether there are opportunities to increase the variety of available equipment for reutilization by connecting with a broad range of equipment vendors. In collaboration with the Program subcontractors, ORS/ATAP will outreach to other organizations to acquire additional equipment for the reutilization program.

Marketing will be an important component to ensure that there is increased awareness, and, therefore, increased use of the reutilization program. A plan will be developed to target educators (in collaboration with other ATAP subcontractors TechACCESS and EBEC). The lead agency will also inform vocational rehabilitation counselors about this resource for their customers as they prepare for employment. ORS/ATAP will also collaborate with OSCIL to publicize the reutilization program among elders and individuals with sensory impairments.



### 5.3 Device Demonstration

ORS/ATAP has entered into subcontracts with community-based organizations in order to establish the capability for device demonstration. Since the inception of the AT program in Rhode Island, there have been two demonstration centers operated by ORS/ATAP subcontractors - TechACCESS of RI, and East Bay Educational Collaborative (EBEC). Each has provided device demonstrations to individuals with disabilities statewide and at no cost.

TechACCESS of RI: The ATAP demonstration program is staffed with expert, experienced professionals including speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, individuals with ATP (Assistive Technology Practitioner) certification, educators, and several assistive technology users who have had many years of experience with blind low vision technologies and hearing technologies. TechACCESS also uses licensed/certified consultants who have specific expertise in seating and position and assistive listening devices. The Staff is not only knowledgeable about the wide variety of devices and their applications at home, in school at work and in the community, but they are also able to assist individuals with making informed AT choices. The staff participates in on going vendor trainings several times a year to keep abreast of the newest technologies, and the close relationship with many local and regional vendors enables the staff to obtain the newest equipment available for self-training and demonstration. TechACCESS plans to expand the existing staff to include an additional communication specialist, an additional low vision specialist, and a general AT practitioner.

The current demonstration program offers free, weekly demonstrations of AT including but not limited to technologies for individuals who are blind, have low vision, have communication disabilities (speech and hearing) and who have physical disabilities. These introductory sessions enable individuals to become aware of the types of technologies from which they might benefit. This format has received significant positive feedback and helps individuals identify what steps they need to take next to obtain further assessment for their specific needs or to obtain devices. TechACCESS plans to continue to offer these demonstrations and to develop ways of reaching more individuals statewide.

The current demonstration center offers a wide variety of devices for individuals of all ages and uses. However, often individuals request to see devices which TechACCESS does not have available. Referrals are then made to other agencies who have these devices. Because of the positive relationship with many vendors, TechACCESS can often obtain specific devices through vendor loan acquisitions or collaboration with other local/regions AT centers such as the ATAP/EBEC demonstration center, the NEAT Marketplace, the Sherlock Center Resource Library etc. TechACCESS, in collaboration with ATAP plans to review the demonstration opportunities in the state and develop a network which increases access to device demonstration. Also, ATAP/TechACCESS plans to meet with the Connecticut NEAT Marketplace to coordinate activities and possibly become a satellite or regional center. Initial meetings with the NEAT director have been positive.

ATAP/TechACCESS will continue to provide hands on device trial with technologies at the adapted computer lab on a weekly basis. This program enables individuals to come to the

center and work with the technologies under the supervision of a Staff member. Users identify areas of specific need, are instructed in the use of the appropriate technology and allowed to practice with the technologies. These hands on trials enable individuals to gain actual experience with a device and better help them select a device that they will not abandon in the future.

In addition, ATAP/TechACCESS will continue to provide individualized appointments for specific needs such as employee/employer equipment demonstrations that are not covered in scheduled public demonstrations, and will develop and provide outreach presentations to seniors and senior service providers regarding AT to improve daily living along with OSCIL'S AT/IL Specialist in collaboration with the state's assisted living centers, Department of Elderly Affairs, University of Rhode Island (URI) Gerontology Program and the Brown University Gerontology Program. Additionally, ATAP/TechACCESS will provide information and equipment demonstrations to educational institutions, (where appropriate, including the EBEC/ATAP Children and Youth Specialist) such as URI Departments of Physical Therapy and Special Education; New England Institute of Technology Occupational Therapy Department; Roger Williams University Nurse/Teacher Program; Rhode Island College Special Education Department, Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) etc. using a "guest lecture" module at the TechACCESS Center.

ATAP/TechACCESS will provide comprehensive information and referral services to individuals regarding the purchasing and maintaining of assistive technology to the public through the ATAP Information and Referral services at TechACCESS at no charge to the public. User friendly informational sheets will be developed to be posted on the ATAP subcontractor's

web sites and disseminated as requested regarding vendor/user rights, issues, etc. To keep this information current, ATAP/TechACCESS will update and maintain an AT service provider database of local and regional vendors, update and maintain a repair service database of local vendors and update and maintain the catalog library and catalog database on site

Because one center cannot purchase all of the AT needed, TechACCESS will continue to work together with the other ATAP subcontractors with vendors to obtain AT devices on long-term loan for demonstration purposes and investigate partnerships which will enable the demonstration center to maintain an up to date variety of devices

With the new law insuring continuance of the AT program, ATAP/TechACCESS will review the current inventory of devices at the demonstration center and develop a short term and long term plan for equitable representation of devices for education, employment, telecommunications and community living to expand the current resources.

EBEC AT Resource Center: The ATAP Children and Youth Resource Center maintains a number of technology devices within a lab setting. The Classroom lab offers a variety of adaptive instructional software, adaptive hardware and devices for students with various disabilities. The Children and Youth Assistive Technology Resource Center conducts workshops, vendor demonstrations, specific device training, and software exploration. The Center also houses the lending library for students.

The ATAP AT Resource Center adaptive computer lab hosts weekly software training sessions that are available to educators and student users in small groups or by individual appointment. A hands-on method of software training is effective and enables teachers to return to their classroom with the useful skills and tools they need to support students. The device lending program is also very beneficial to educators and students. Educators, therapists and students are able to trial Assistive Technology equipment before a purchase is made through their school district and Individual Education Program process. Over the last several years the resource library has been expanded to include multiple keyboards, Dana's, Alphasmarts, Intellikeys, touch windows, headsets/microphones, Sound Field Systems, low tech communication devices, low vision tools and a computer with voice recognition software for assessment trial. The East Bay Educational Collaborative has the assistive technology inventory housed on a listserve and website for easy access for all Rhode Island Students and educators to access. During the next three years ATAP/EBEC plans to expand the inventory and upgrade the existing software to include to newest features from accessibility software developers. The Children and Youth Resource Center has several hundred pieces of Technology and keeps accurate records of consumer use. The future focus will gear more toward literacy, accessible media formats, blind-low vision and transitioning youth in vocational services and higher education college bound using technology. Relationships with higher educational institutions and students disability services centers continues to grow and expand as more and more students with disabilities age and continue on to higher education settings.

#### 5.4 Device Loan Program

The Office of Rehabilitation Services/ATAP, as well as the Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, has developed a device loan program. Also, ATAP subcontracts with EBEC and TechACCESS as part of the device loan program in Rhode Island. These programs, however, are targeted to specific disability populations. They include a device loan program for individuals who are blind, children and educators, and individuals with deafness. Over the next three years, ORS/ATAP will establish a network among these existing programs, while seeking to expand the capabilities by outreach to device vendors and other community based organizations.

Over the past two years, ORS/ATAP has established a device loan program for individuals with blindness who may benefit from AT in education, employment, and in community living. These devices range from simple technology to more complex devices. With the opportunity to try these devices on a short-term basis, better decisions are being made about technology acquisition. Over the next three years, ORS/ATAP intends to expand this device loan program to include more varied technologies; and to accommodate a broader range of disabilities.

ATAP, through its subcontractor TechACCESS, will develop a communication device loan program for adults with progressive neurological disabilities such as MS, ALS, PLS and neuromuscular disabilities resulting from brain injury and increase its current number of devices by five.

TechACCESS will collaborate with agencies, neurologists and others who work with adults with neurological impairment to ascertain the number of individuals who could benefit from communication devices and disseminate information to medical professionals, community based organizations and individuals regarding communication loss and communication devices. TechACCESS will review national models for device loan programs and use information and recommendations to increase the number of individuals served by the communication device loan program.

Under the ORS/ATAP subcontract, EBEC's AT resource center has also created a device lending program. Educators, therapists and students are able to trial Assistive Technology equipment before a purchase is made through their school district and Individual Education Program process. Over the last several years EBEC has expanded the resource library to include multiple keyboards, Dana's, Alphasmarts, Intellikeys, touch windows, headsets/microphones, Sound Field Systems, low tech communication devices, low vision tools and a computer with voice recognition software for assessment trial. The East Bay Educational Collaborative has the Assistive Technology Inventory housed on a listserve and website for easy access for all Rhode Island Students and educators to access. During the next three years ATAP/EBEC plans to expand the inventory and upgrade the existing software to include the newest features from accessibility software developers. The Children and Youth Resource Center has several hundred pieces of technology and keeps accurate records of consumer use. The future focus will gear more toward literacy, accessible media formats, blind/low vision and transitioning Youth in Vocational services and Higher Education College bound using technology. Relationships with Higher Educational Institutions and Students disability services centers continues to grow and

expand as more and more students with disabilities age and continue on to higher education settings. The shift in thinking that all students have needs to learn in a multiplicity of ways and methods has taken shape in Rhode Island; and can be improved upon with a focus of ATAP spending time and expertise to develop these critical relationships, supporting them with professional development and training opportunities.



**Attachment 6 – Comparable Support:**

N/A

**Attachment 7 – State Flexibility:**

N/A

## **Attachment 8 – State Leadership Activities:**

### **8.1 Training and Technical Assistance**

The Office of Rehabilitation Services provides on-going training and technical assistance to staff on assistive technology devices and services to benefit their customers as they participate in vocational rehabilitation programs. In addition, the Office of Rehabilitation Services has, and will continue to subcontract with community-based organizations. They include East Bay Educational Collaborative, TechACCESS of Rhode Island, Ocean State Center for Independent Living, and the Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College.

### **Employment**

ORS has and will continue to provide rehabilitation technology services including assistive technology devices and services throughout the rehabilitation process. ORS has and will continue to contract with a rehabilitation technology organization to provide consultation and technical assistance to ORS counselors. On-going training on current AT will be provided. In-service training programs will also be developed and conducted for community rehabilitation programs whose vocational rehabilitation services are purchased by ORS. ORS will enter into an interstate agreement with Massachusetts and Connecticut to provide driver assessment services utilizing a van modified with highly specialized technologies.

ORS has, and will continue to provide training and technical assistance to local One Stop Career Centers (netWORKri) to ensure that individuals with disabilities seeking employment can access job-related information - labor market information, employment opportunities, etc. ORS/ATAP has purchased adaptive technology (including screen reading software, and assistive listening devices) for the One Stop Career Centers' Resource Rooms. Over the next year, ORS/ATAP will assess the need for updated equipment for these Centers.

Information Technology:

Over the next three years, ATAP will through its subcontractor, the Sherlock Center, provide training and technical assistance in the area of assistive technology for information technology.

ATAP will determine the extent of knowledge regarding accessible information requirements, techniques, and strategies of information providers ATAP will determine the capacity of information providers to deliver accessible information technology resources through the internet.

In order to gather and assess current knowledge and skills, ATAP will survey Rhode Island stakeholders to:

1. Find out their capacities to access and use information technology resources from the Internet.

2. Identify barriers to full information access experienced by individuals with disabilities.
3. Identify information providers' knowledge/skill weaknesses in accessible Internet-related information technology.
4. Develop strategies to increase access to information on the Internet.

In order to increase knowledge and capacity of Internet information providers regarding accessible information requirements, techniques, and strategies, ATAP/Sherlock Center will:

1. Provide technical assistance regarding internet accessibility requirements and techniques to information providers from Rhode Island state agencies, including state webmaster.
2. Develop information tools regarding internet accessibility requirements and techniques.
3. Distribute information tools regarding internet access to consumers and service & information providers.
4. Provide technical assistance regarding internet accessibility requirements and techniques to information providers from Rhode Island state agencies & private AT service providers.
5. Review and modify, as needed, the information tools regarding Internet accessibility requirements and techniques.

#### Education

ATAP will collaborate with the RI Department of Education (RIDE), Office of Special Populations and the RIDE Assistive Technology workgroup to develop and present training materials regarding the new Assistive Technology Competencies for Educators which were developed by this group over the last year.

Over the next three years, the process will include self-assessment questionnaires distributed to educators at local districts (print and on-line). The results will be analyzed and recommendations for draft revision developed.

- Collaborate with RI Department of Education and other stakeholders to determine most appropriate state approval route (program approval, endorsement, or certification)
- Identify initial and secondary districts for distribution/presentation
- Develop, distribute, gather, and analyze survey of local education districts to determine training needs regarding AT Competencies
- Use survey and interviews results to develop AT instruction for local districts
- Work with teams at the local district level
- Offer instruction in various forms (modules, workshops, courses)
- Integrate instruction into established professional development venues

ATAP (TechACCESS, EBEC and the Sherlock Center) will provide technical assistance to the RIDE, Office of Special Populations in the development of the state's response to the Instructional Materials Accessibility Act in response to the new IDEA mandates and guidelines.

TechACCESS will continue to collaborate with the RIDE, Office of Special Populations, to develop and present assistive technology training opportunities for educational administrators and teachers regarding assistive technology issues through the continuation of the After School Tech Time Program for students/families, and educators, and will collaborate with EBEC to insure statewide accessibility to these programs.

ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will participate in Statewide IEP training activities as it relates to assistive technology.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will participate in the Rhode Island School Improvement Grant (RISIG). This will include technical assistance and support from the AT Resource Center funded by ATAP to Master Teachers. The expectation is that AT will be incorporated into daily instruction methods.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide Assistive Technology/Universal Design Training to educators that support students with: learning disabilities, hearing impairments, low vision, and speech and language impairments.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will participate in RIDE Office of Special Populations School Support Visits in order to monitor Rhode Island School districts for best practices in Assistive Technology services.

Through its advisory council, the Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology (RICAT), ATAP has established a linkage with the University of Rhode Island's Bio-engineering Department. The University of Rhode Island has an established Assistive Technology Laboratory (URI AT Lab) as part of the Biomedical Engineering Program. For the past six years the URI AT Lab has developed a variety of customized AT devices to help individuals with quadriplegia, cerebral palsy, and visual impairment. These devices include a single-switch environmental control system, a voice-activated nurse call system, an ultrasonic proximity switch, a multiport sip-and-puff switch box, an innovative finger switch, a light activated switch for reducing false triggers due to spasm, a single-switch-controlled computer keyboard and mouse, a light sensor to detect LED indicators for individuals with visual impairment, an adapted piano tuner for individuals with visual impairment, and an automated page turner. The undergraduate and graduates students at the URI Biomedical Engineering Program have worked as interns in the AT Lab to develop these devices. The URI AT Lab has also partnered with Enable Devices (Hastings-on-Hudson, New York) for transferring technologies to industry and developing prototypes into commercial products.

During the next three years, the URI AT Lab will contribute to the ATAP Partnership in the following ways. First, the AT Lab will design and develop unique AT devices that will best enhance the functions of individuals with certain kinds of disability. Second, the AT Lab will adapt and adjust commercially available AT devices to suit the needs of the individuals. Third, the AT Lab will train future biomedical engineers for the AT industry. Fourth, the AT Lab will provide a channel for technology transfer to industry such that the benefits of the innovative, customized AT devices be brought to the general community of AT consumers.



## Transition

ORS has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the RI Department of Education, Office of Special Populations to ensure that students with disabilities transitioning from secondary education to post-secondary activities receive necessary services in a timely manner. As part of this MOU, a collaborative services chart has been developed. The process for the provision of assistive technology, devices and services, is described in this chart.

ORS has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the three public institutions of higher education (University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island) to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to academic programs; and receive the accommodations including assistive technology, they require.

ATAP program director and subcontractors, TechACCESS and EBEC participate in Youth in Transition, a workgroup of Rhodes to Independence, designed to support the identification and inclusion of appropriate AT during transition from school to work.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide technical assistance to Regional Transition Centers within the Regional Educational Collaboratives, Parent Transition Specialists and vocational specialists working in the Regional Vocational Assessment Centers funded by the Office of Rehabilitation Services.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide a training series to the Parent Training Information Center (PTIC) to impact the continuum of Rhode Island students with disabilities. (Kit training with 8-10 AT kits)

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide technical assistance to the Regional Transition Academies which will include student evaluations, staff development and AT General Information.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide workshops and information to the Local Advisory Committees for Special Education and outreach activities for Transition events statewide.

#### ATAP/OSCIL Transition Services - Adults with Disabilities

ATAP will outreach to nursing home facilities, senior citizens and family members about the Community Living Option and offer assistance to facilitate people with disabilities to move from the nursing home setting to a less restrictive environment.

ATAP/OSCIL's services will include assistance in identifying and securing accessible housing, establishing community connections, securing personal care attendant services and other community support services, accessing public transportation, acquiring appropriate assistive technology and securing home safety devices, based on the needs of the consumer.

ATAP AT/IL Specialist will annually hold at least 3 informational presentations to nursing home staff regarding the Community Living Option, clarifying how the use of community support services, home adaptations and assistive devices can make independent living a viable option for seniors.

#### Assistive Technology for The Deaf & Hard Of Hearing Communities

ATAP/OSCIL will raise awareness among Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers and their families on how AT can remove barriers to independence.

OSCIL's Deaf Services Specialist will administer the Adaptive "Shake-Awake" Smoke Detector Program for individuals who are hard of hearing or Deaf, and provide information and referral, home assessments, and facilitate the purchase and installation of these special early warning systems.

ATAP/OSCIL AT Specialist will work directly with individual consumers and their families by assessing need for AT, identifying appropriate AT to meet consumers' independent living goals, assisting with training on utilizing equipment, and providing information on alternate funding sources for the acquisition of AT.

#### 8.2 Public Awareness Activities

ATAP will maintain and expand the ATAP Information and Referral Center as a statewide resource for assistive technology information and resources designed to meet the needs of targeted individuals and entities.

As part of the State Plan, the ATAP Resource Center at TechACCESS, will continue to provide information on assistive technology laws and rights, AT devices, local and regional AT services, and public and private funding to individuals of all ages for all disabilities. General information will be provided on the benefits of AT with respect to enhancing the capacity of an individual to achieve in all areas of life by maintaining a toll-free in-state number, email address access, and web site with linkages to other AT resources.

The current Information and Referral (I&R) Center is staffed by a full-time person who has been providing free, timely informational services to the general public for over three years. She responds to requests for information within one week and often does extensive research to identify appropriate resources and services. She refers specific or difficult questions to other AT specialists at TechACCESS and other ATAP subcontractors who provide the requested information. Materials most sent are vendor catalogs, web resources, and service provider information. Contacts are recorded and reported quarterly to ATAP. Under the State Plan, TechACCESS will continue the ATAP I&R Center and will develop and implement a follow-up procedure to determine the effectiveness of the I&R Center in helping individuals actually obtain the devices and services they need.

The ATAP AT Resource Room is open to the public at no charge. The resource room offers an accessible vendor and services catalog library, AT journals, AT books, videos, and newsletters from other AT resource centers. ATAP will maintain and expand this resource and increase the capacity of resources by 5%. TechACCESS will also insure that the inventory list is user friendly, accessible to all, and available on line.

ATAP has, and will continue to conduct an annual AT conference. TechACCESS will act as coordinator for collaboration with other agencies to plan a comprehensive statewide conference on assistive technology in November to insure that the conference has a comprehensive representation of the local, regional and national vendors of assistive technology devices and services. ATAP will evaluate the impact of the annual conference and make recommendations for improvements as necessary.

ATAP/TechACCESS will continue to publish the ATAP assistive technology newsletter, three times per year, in collaboration with the RIDE, Office of Special Populations. ATAP will review and re-establish a comprehensive database of interested individuals and agencies to expand dissemination by 10%.

ATAP will determine how to expand the readership more efficiently and cost effectively through the use of email, reading on the Insight Radio program etc.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will participate in the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Leadership Institutes to increase ATAP visibility and promote training opportunities.

The ATAP AT Children and Youth Specialist will promote the Children and Youth Resource Center to all District Special Education Networks using WEB, Internet List serve technology, and the Association of Rhode Island Special Educators (ARISE) yearly conferences.

During the next three years, OSCIL will raise awareness among elder consumers and their families on how assistive technology can remove barriers to independence.

OSCIL's ATAP Specialist will hold a minimum of 6 AT presentations or demonstrations annually at senior centers, meal sites, support or social group meetings or events sponsored by other disability organizations such as Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH), the Arthritis Foundation, and the RI Association for the Deaf. Thirty percent (30%) of these presentations/demonstrations will be presented to culturally diverse populations, including minority and/or underserved individuals, and to those residing in rural and outlying areas of the State.

OSCIL's ATAP Specialist will respond to a minimum of 6 requests annually for AT presentations, exhibits and/or technical assistance from local government and community-based agencies such as the Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), in order to apprise professionals of the value of AT in supporting aging in

place. Information will be shared on the variety of assistive technology available and where AT can be obtained, including information vehicles such as websites, catalogs and organizations.

OSCIL's Information & Referral Specialist, in collaboration with the ATAP and Home Access Specialists, will include AT information, news articles, and human-interest stories in OSCIL's quarterly publication, *Signs of Independence*, as well as in other agency newsletters and through informational articles in local newspapers and senior bulletins.

OSCIL's Information & Referral Specialist will help establish a "Where to Go for AT" resource page on OSCIL's website that will link consumers to available AT catalogs, vendors and organizations that provide AT.

### 8.3 Coordination and Collaboration

Since its inception, ORS has instituted a model of coordination and collaboration to implement the requirements of the Assistive Technology Act, which has included subcontracting with community-based organizations. This has enabled the program to maximize the impact of ORS and the other agencies to effect systems change in the areas of education, employment, health care, and community living. ORS will continue to utilize this model.

ATAP/TechACCESS will collaborate with the EBEC Center for Youth and Transition to develop and present training materials to the state's Early Intervention Programs regarding the processes for evaluating, obtaining and procuring assistive technology devices through the state's Medicaid program.

The Sherlock Center at RI College and TechACCESS will collaborate to offer an introductory course on “AT in the Classroom” and will begin to develop a series of advanced courses on assistive technology for applications including augmentative communication for teachers and families and AT internships.

TechACCESS will collaborate with the Department of Human Services to review how assistive technology devices and services are reimbursed for individuals birth to twenty-one and to develop and publish information to clarify and facilitate Medicaid availability and processes.

ATAP subcontractors, TechACCESS and EBEC, will continue to monitor the Special House Commission to promote and develop a comprehensive system of education for visually impaired children by participating on the Advisory Board to insure that assistive technology concerns are addressed and included in planning the agenda for the Rhode Island Vision and Educational Services Program (RIVESP).

During the next three years, OSCIL, in collaboration with ATAP partners, will network with other disability-related groups and organizations to promote the value of, and access to, assistive technology.

OSCIL's ATAP Specialist will participate in events sponsored by advocacy groups, state agencies, senior groups, Centers for Independent Living, and other disability-related groups to address barriers to obtaining assistive technology.



OSCIL's Program Director and ATAP Specialist will actively participate in monthly meetings of the ATAP partner agencies to help establish smoother access for consumers to obtain AT through Medicaid services and other alternative funding programs.

OSCIL's ATAP, Information & Referral, and Home Access Specialists will encourage consumer representation at public hearings, which emphasize the importance of AT as a solution to independence in the home and community, through targeted mailings, OSCIL's quarterly newsletter, and through personal contacts via telephone, email or home visits.

ATAP will work with the Department of Human Services Early Intervention Programs to consider assistive technology devices and services in working with infants and toddlers and their families.

The ATAP/EBEC AT Children and Youth Specialist will provide assistive technology information & training resources for Early Childhood Parent Consultants/parents support groups.

The ATAP/EBEC AT Children and Youth Specialist will promote the assistive technology resource center(s) to provide professional development to all early intervention case managers and EI staff.

**Attachment 9 – Involvement of Public and Private Entities:**

9.1 In order to carry out the activities described in ATTACHMENT 5 – device loan, device demonstration, and device reutilization, the Office of Rehabilitation Services has, and will continue to enter into subcontracts with community-based organizations, including TechACCESS of Rhode Island, East Bay Educational Collaborative, and PARI Independent Living Center (in accordance with State procurement requirements). ORS works with these agencies to ensure that the services of ATAP are statewide, comprehensive and meet the needs of all disability groups. This has been the model of the AT program in Rhode Island since 1993, and it will continue to be how the requirements of the AT Act of 1998 as amended will be fulfilled. This model has a far-reaching impact, as the subcontractors, in turn, have linkages with additional organizations through other programs for which they provide services. Also, each of these agencies have either governing boards, or advisory committees allowing for more public involvement, and consumer input. Two of the subcontractors, are, in fact, independent living centers, whose governing boards are comprised of at least fifty-one percent individuals with disabilities.

9.2 N/A

9.3 The Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology (RICAT) has a long history of close involvement in the activities of ATAP. At each Council meeting, a program report is provided to

the membership by the Program Director. The subcontractors also provide information about initiatives that are underway.

Currently, RICAT members are working with ATAP to explore methods of establishing a state financing system in RI.

The Council is participating in statewide Public Forums on the Concerns of People with Disabilities to solicit comments on the State Plan for Assistive Technology. In addition, the Executive Committee of the Council will review draft Attachments as they are prepared to offer input on planned initiatives.

The Council will meet on a quarterly basis to evaluate progress toward established goals and to offer suggestions for improvement and change. Measurable goals contained in this plan will be reviewed and evaluated on a quarterly basis and any adjustments necessary will be made in response to and under the guidance of RICAT.

**Attachment 10 - State Support:**

10.1 State Support for State-level Activities:

The Office of Rehabilitation Services has, and will continue to provide in kind administrative support for the Assistive Technology Access Partnership. This will include office support – office space, telephone, office supplies, etc.

Additionally, it is anticipated that each year, the Office of Rehabilitation Services will provide in kind support for the device loan program for individuals with visual and other impairments which includes storage space, staff time, as well as other administrative support – office space, office supplies, etc.

10.2 State Support for State Leadership Activities:

ATAP subcontractor, TechACCESS receives state funds from the Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Special Populations to provide *The Schools Project*. This program is funded to continue through June, 2007. The *Schools Project* will continue to link with the ATAP Information and Resource Center to provide informational, referral and resource activities to parents and educational/therapeutic personnel especially as it relates to assistive technology for education. The *Schools Project* will work together with ATAP to sponsor the statewide annual AT conference, and also will provide some funding for the TechACCESSORY, the ATAP newsletter which is distributed 3 times per year. The *Schools Project* also is funded to

provide opportunities for parents and educational professionals to see devices demonstrated and to practice with technologies through such activities as After School Tech Time for families and educators, training workshops, vendor demonstrations etc. The *Schools Project* funds also support the technical assistance which is provided to school systems developing AT teams and competencies as well as to administrators seeking AT information and assistance. TechACCESS will continue to work on the dissemination of the AT Competencies for RI Educators and will develop training sessions to present them to educators.

The Rhode Island Department of Health provides personnel and financial assistance to the statewide ATAP AT conference and will continue this support for the 2006 Conference. The Department of Health will also provide some funding and collaborate with TechACCESS of RI in reviewing the role of technology services available during transition from school to post secondary educational/employment programs. Activities being considered are development of informational materials and the provision of some direct services as a pilot program.

The Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL) receives, and is anticipated to receive funds from private donations, local fire departments, and Rotary that supports the provision of AT devices for individuals with disabilities without the imposition of eligibility criteria.

## **Attachment 11 – Allocation and Utilization of Funds**

11.1 Tracking Expenditures – Describe planned procedures for tracking expenditures for activities described in sections 4(e)(2) and (3).

All receipts and disbursements within ORS are recorded within the same web-based financial recording system. We also maintain subsidiary ledgers for individual programs using spreadsheet software programs.

Each expenditure under this grant will be analyzed by the Program Director and the Fiscal Manager to determine which activity the expenditure pertains. After identifying the activity, the expenditure will be posted to a specific subsidiary ledger that will be organized to arrange the expenditures according to the activity allocation distribution as listed in 11.2. The subsidiary ledger will be reviewed monthly to ensure that expenditures will fall within the prescribed activity allocation distribution for the whole program year.

11.2 Proposed Budget Allocations – Attach a budget containing proposed allocations for activities described in sections 4(e)(2) and (3).

The following are proposed budget allocations for State Leadership and State Level Activities for Year 1 of the program. These numbers will serve as an estimate only for Year 2 and Year 3 of this State Plan.

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<b>Proposed Allocation</b>	<b>Distribution</b>	<b>Total Award Amount</b>
		<b><u>\$301,520</u></b>
State Level	60%	\$162,821
State Leadership	40%	\$108,547
<i>Leadership Activities</i>	<i>95% (of 40%)</i>	<i>\$103,120</i>
<i>Transition</i>	<i>5% (of 40%)</i>	<i>\$ 5,427</i>
Indirect Costs	10%	\$ 30,152
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$301,520</b>

Within the above budget, The Office of Rehabilitation Services/ATAP proposes to apportion funds for specific activities in the following manner. However, these numbers reflect a proposal only, and will serve as an estimate only for Year 2 and Year 3 of this State Plan.

<b>State Level Activities</b>	<b>Proposed Allocation</b>
State Financing Activities	\$22821
Device Reutilization Program	\$50,000
Device Loan Program	\$50,000
Device Demonstration Program	\$40,000
 <b>State Leadership Activities</b>	 <b>Proposed Allocation</b>
Training and Technical Assistance Activities	\$46,900
Transition	\$ 5,427
Public Awareness Activities	\$43,120
Coordination and Collaboration	\$20,000

## **Part II**

### **Assurances**



Section 1 – Recordkeeping, Data Collection, and Reporting

1.1 The State will annually collect data related to the required activities implemented by the State under this section in order to prepare the progress reports required under subsection 4(f) of the Act. *Section 4(d)(6)(A)*

1.2 The State will prepare reports to the Secretary in such form and containing such information as the Secretary may require to carry out the Secretary's functions under this Act and keep such records and allow access to such records as the Secretary may require to ensure the correctness and verification of information provided to the Secretary. *Section 4(d)(6)(H)*

1.3 The Lead Agency will submit the State Plan for AT on behalf of the State to ensure conformance with Federal and State accounting requirements. *Section 4(c)(1)(A)(i)(II)*

1.4 The Lead Agency will submit the progress report on behalf of the State. *Section 4(f)*

Section 2 – Administration of Funds

2.1 The Lead Agency will control and administer the funds received through the grant. *Section 4(d)(6)(C)*

2.2 Funds received through the grant will be expended in accordance with Section 4 of the Act, and will be used to supplement, and not supplant, funds available from other sources for technology-related assistance, including the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services. *Section 4(d)(6)(B)*

2.3 The State will adopt such fiscal control and accounting procedures as may be necessary to ensure proper disbursement of and accounting for the funds received through the grant. *Section 4(d)(6)(D)*

2.4 Funds made available through a grant to a State under this Act will not be used for direct payment for an assistive technology device for an individual with a disability. *Section 4(e)(5)*

2.5 A public agency or an individual with a disability holds title to any property purchased with funds received under the grant and administers that property. *Section 4(d)(6)(F)*

Section 3 – Accessibility of Programs

3.1 The physical facility of the Lead Agency and Implementing Entity, if any, meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding accessibility for individuals with disabilities. *Section 4(d)(6)(E)*

3.2 Activities carried out in the State that are authorized under this Act, and supported by Federal funds received under this Act, will comply with the standards established by the

Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (20 U.S.C. 794d). *Section 4(d)(6)(G)*

Section 4 – Requirements of 34 CFR 76.104

- 4.1 The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit this plan.
- 4.2 The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under this program.
- 4.3 The State legally may carry out each provision of this plan.
- 4.4 All provisions of this plan are consistent with State law.
- 4.5 A State officer, specified by title in this certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
- 4.6 The State officer who submits this plan, specified by title in this certification, has authority to submit this plan.
- 4.7 The agency that submits this plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved this plan.
- 4.8 The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.

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*After having carefully reviewed sections 1-4 of Part II of the State Plan for AT and the corresponding statute, the undersigned, authorized to sign the document on behalf of their respective organizations, hereby affirm that the State of Rhode Island is in compliance and will remain in compliance with the aforementioned assurances during the three-year period of this STATE PLAN FOR AT.*



August 22, 2005

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SIGNATURE

DATE

Raymond A. Carroll, Administrator

401-421-7005 x301

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NAME AND TITLE

PHONE NO.

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SIGNATURE

DATE

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NAME AND TITLE

PHONE NO.

## **Rhode Island GEPA Provision**

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services/Office of Rehabilitation Services will take all the necessary steps to ensure that all partners and subcontractors will comply with the GEPA (General Education Provisions Act), section 427. We will ensure that all people have equal access to and equitable participation in our programs and services.

We will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age. All programs and materials will be developed so that children and adults with disabilities and those with diverse backgrounds will be able to successfully and fully participate. For example:

1. For individuals who do not speak or understand English, we utilize the AT&T Language line. This service has operators available to translate information over the telephone.
2. Literacy levels will be considered. For those individuals who cannot read, or have limited reading skills, we have the ability to put the information on audiotape, use captioning services and have materials prepared in Braille for individuals who are blind.
3. We systemically reach out to people in rural areas.
4. We make sure that all materials and services are developed and provided based on cultural needs of the people with whom we work.

5. Our programs will be held in physically accessible locations. In addition, we will ensure that if someone needs accommodations such as sign language interpreters or CARTT reporters to effectively participate they will be provided.

6. We will ensure that web sites are accessible and meet the Rhode Island State web content accessibility standard.

**Article I.      CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING**

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Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Education relies when it makes a grant or enters into a cooperative agreement.

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As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

- (a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;
- (b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- (c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants and contracts under grants and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certification.

NAME OF APPLICANT Department of Human Services/Office of Rehabilitation Services	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME Assistive Technology Access Partnership
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE Raymond A. Carroll, Administrator	
SIGNATURE 	DATE August 22, 2005